

U.S. Statement at the UPR of Iran, 20th Session, October 31, 2014

The United States welcomes the delegation from Iran.

We recommend that Iran:

1. End the harassment and persecution of journalists and release detained Washington Post reporter Jason Rezaian, to demonstrate its commitment to freedom of expression;
2. Uphold its religious freedom obligations and release those imprisoned for their religious beliefs, such as Pastor Saeed Abedini, and protect the rights of all individuals to manifest their religious beliefs
3. Invite the Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Iran to visit the country and provide him with access to appropriate officials, facilities, and prisoners.

We are deeply concerned about violations of freedom of religion and freedom of expression in Iran. There are continued reports of government harassment towards members of religious minorities. Journalists have been arrested, detained, or prevented from doing their work. Access to the internet also has been curtailed.

We are disappointed that Iran refuses to cooperate with the Special Rapporteur and has denied him permission to visit the country, and that security officials have reportedly harassed individuals in Iran for cooperating with him.

We hope Iran's government will answer its people's calls for greater freedoms and will demonstrate a sincere commitment to renewed engagement with the world.